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A NEW SUBSPECIES OF *RALLINA EURIZONOIDES* (AVES: RALLIDAE) FROM THE BATAN ISLANDS, PHILIPPINES

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Abstract.—Specimens of the Slaty-legged Crake (*Rallina eurizonoides*) collected on Batan Island, Philippines, in 1981 and 1985 are the first records of the species for the Batan Islands and are here recognized as *R. e. alvarezi,* new subspecies. The first three records of *R. e. eurizonoides* for Fuga Island in the Babuyan Islands are also reported.

The Slaty-legged Crake (*Rallina eurizonoides*) ranges from India through Southeast Asia to the Greater Sundas, and from the Ryukyu Islands of Japan south through the Philippines to Celebes. Ripley (1977) recognized six subspecies with nominate *R. e. eurizonoides* restricted to the Philippines, where duPont (1971) listed it from the islands of Basilan, Bohol, Cagayan, Cebu, Leyte, Luzon, Mindanao, Mindoro, Negros, Panay, and Jolo. Recently, duPont and Rabor (1973) have reported it from Sanga Sanga in the Tawitawi Group, and Dickinson, Kennedy, and Rozendaal (in prep.) have located specimens from Guimaras, Marinduque, Samar, and Siquijor taken by the 1887–1888 Steere Expedition to the Philippines. It is also known from three previously unpublished specimen records from Fuga Island in the Babuyan Group collected for the Delaware Museum of Natural History on 16 Mar 1980 (DMNH 70273, 70275) and 17 Mar 1980 (DMNH 70274).

During a visit to Batan Island in the Batan Islands north of Luzon in the Philippines on 31 Oct 1981, Kennedy collected a specimen of *R. eurizonoides* (LSUMZ 105082, female) that is the first record for the island. Recent collections we made in the Batan Islands in collaboration with the Philippine National Museum and Silliman University from 28 May to 11 Jun 1985 yielded additional specimens of *R. eurizonoides* (4 skins: 2 adult males, 1 half-grown male and 1 adult female; and 1 complete and 1 partial skeleton).

After comparing the Batan birds with specimens of *R. e. eurizonoides* from other islands in the Philippines and samples of the other subspecies, particularly *R. e. formosana* from Taiwan and *R. e. minahasa* from Celebes, we have concluded that the specimens from Batan represent a new subspecies, to be known as:

Rallina eurizonoides alvarezi,
new subspecies

Holotype.—PNM 16301, adult male in breeding condition (largest testis—7 × 14 mm), 31 May 1985, western slope of Mt. Iraya, 180 m elevation, Sitio Nacamaya, 3 km NE of Basco, Batan Island, Batanes Province, Philippines, R. S. Kennedy and party (collector's no. 1048).

Paratypes.—LSUMZ 105082 and USNM 582810–582812, Batan Island, 1.5 to 4 km N or NE of Basco, R. S. Kennedy and party, 31 Oct 1981 (LSUMZ 105082) and 31 May to 8 Jun 1985 (USNM 582810–582812).

Subspecies characters.—Differs from *R. e. eurizonoides* and *R. e. formosana* by having: the upperparts, and outer edges of wing and tail feathers darker olive brown; the top and sides of head, hind neck, lower throat and breast darker chestnut; the white barring of

underparts narrower and less pronounced; the throat, in males, chestnut, not pale rufous as in *R. e. eurizonoides* or white as in *R. e. formosana*; and the inner webs of wing and tail feathers dusky brown almost black. Differs further from *R. e. formosana* in having a longer tail (*R. e. alvarezi* (4) 66.9 ± 1.31, range 65.5–68.0; *R. e. formosana* (2) 60.5 ± 4.95, range 57.0–64.0), shorter culmen (from feathers on side of culmen: *R. e. alvarezi* (4) 20.6 ± 0.46, range 20.4–21.2; *R. e. formosana* (2) 24.4 ± 1.13, range 23.6–25.2), and a shorter tarsus (*R. e. alvarezi* (5) 43.3 ± 0.85, range 42.2–44.0; *R. e. formosana* (2) 44.5 ± 0.85, range 43.9–45.1).

Like *R. e. minahasa* in being of similar size, in having dark olive brown upperparts and in having narrow and less pronounced white barring on the underparts. Differs from *R. e. minahasa* in having the top and sides of head, hind neck, lower throat and breast darker chestnut and the throat, in males, chestnut, not pale rufous.

Rallina e. alvarezi differs from the other subspecies by size and color of the head and neck (*R. e. sepiaria* from the Ryukyu Islands), and by the narrow white barring of the underparts and throat color of the male (*R. e. amauroptera* from India; and *R. e. telmatophila* from mainland South-east Asia). Females are like males except that they have pale rufous throats like *R. e. eurizonoides* and *R. e. minahasa.*

Soft parts.—Iris dark orange in males and bright red with a faint inner ring of orange in females; eye ring orange; upper mandible dark gray, almost black, with blue-green to green base; lower mandible with blue-green to green proximally turning to gray distally; legs and feet gray.

Description of juvenile.—USNM 582812, about 3–4 weeks old; forehead, superciliary line and malar region with black down feathers; crown, neck, upper back and wings blackish gray with a dark olive brown wash; lower back and rump blackish neutral gray; throat dark neutral gray; underparts sooty gray with a faint olive brown wash and with some white flecks on the breast and belly. Iris dark olive brown; bill and legs black.

Measurements.—Wing chord (4) 131.4 ± 6.61, range 123.2–137.7; see above for other measurements. Weight (1 ♂) 128 g, (1 ♀ with fully developed shelled egg in the oviduct) 180 g.

Range.—Batan Island. Kennedy and A. Fidel heard this species calling on Sabtang Island in the Batan Islands. The species was not encountered on nearby Ivojos Island and is unknown to the inhabitants.

Status.—Fairly common but extremely secretive in forest and second growth. All specimens were located and flushed from the forest floor by a dog. Known in the Ivatan dialect as *Adongong.*

Etymology.—Named in honor of Jesus B. Alvarez, Jr., for his untiring efforts to conserve Philippine fauna and flora.

Remarks.—Of the three known specimens from Fuga, two clearly resemble *R. e. eurizonoides.* The third (DMNH 70274) has the white barring on the belly as in *R. e. eurizonoides* but the olive brown of the upperparts is nearly as dark as in *R. e. alvarezi* and darker than in any of the specimens of *R. e. eurizonoides* we examined. Nevertheless, the Fuga birds, although tending toward *R. e. alvarezi,* appear to be closer to *R. e. eurizonoides.*

The relationships of *R. e. alvarezi* are not clear. It is most similar to *R. e. minahasa* of Celebes and least similar to *R. e. formosana* and the other races of *R. eurizonoides* owing to its more richly colored upperparts and narrower abdominal barring.

Specimens examined.—*R. e. alvarezi*: 1 (LSUMZ), 1 (PNM), 3 (USNM). *R. e. amauroptera*: 4 (USNM). *R. e. eurizonoides*: Bohol, 1 (FMNH); Cebu, 3 (DMNH); Fuga, 3 (DMNH); Leyte, 2 (USNM); Luzon, 57 (DMNH), 3 (FMNH); Mindanao, 2 (USNM); Mindoro, 1 (FMNH); Negros, 1 (FMNH); Panay, 1 (USNM); Sanga Sanga, Tawitawi, 3 (DMNH); Siquijor, 2 (USNM). *R. e. formosana*: 3 (USNM). *R. e. minahasa*: 3 (AMNH), 1 (USNM). *R. e. sepiaria*:

2 (AMNH), 1 (type) (USNM). *R. e. telmatophila*: 2 (USNM).

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